

Assessor Opposes Ballot Measure on 'Open Space'

By Philip E. Watson
County Assessor

Proposition 3 on the November ballot is a perfect example of the games that can be played with words. The proposition is entitled "Open Space Conservation" — which sounds about as controversial as motherhood.

But when one reads the fine print in the proposition, it turns out that the only open space is conserved in the space in its many loopholes.

The measure provides that the legislature may define open space lands and may provide that when such lands are subject to enforceable restriction for use solely for recreation, enjoyment of scenic beauty, natural resources, or production of food or fiber, these lands shall be assessed according to such use.

Undoubtedly, the protection of scenic beauty and the conservation of farm land are worthwhile goals. But we can do these things without this constitutional amendment. Anyone who wants his land to remain undeveloped may do so by a simple deed restriction in perpetuity.

Granted, forever is a long time. Maybe by 2066 we'll all be living underground and won't need "scenic beauty." Maybe by 2066 we'll be dining exclusively on pills and may as well convert unused farm lands to some other development.

During the period of the contract. When people don't choose to use these ways, it's because they are not interested in true conservation of open space as they are in the preservation of potential real estate profits.

Proposition 3 gives a direct tax break to land speculators. With no long-term use restriction on their land, they could hold it at low taxes until they're ready to sell at their price. They would thus enjoy

all the speculative profits while the rest of us would be paying higher taxes to make up for their special tax break.

PROPOSITION 3 would also permit a tax exemption for oil and other minerals beneath "open space" land.

Proposition 3 would allow a tax reduction for those who exploit natural resources. Should the homeowner have to pay a part of the taxes of those who own timber, quarries and mines?

Proposition 3 would allow

industrial interests to hide under the umbrella of "land used for the production of food and fiber." Should the homeowner be subsidizing packing houses, feed lots or a large estate with a little pasture land?

SINCE THE legislature, under this proposition, would have the power to grant any or all of these tax breaks, the voters are being asked to vote blindly for legislation that has not yet been written.

Furthermore, to give the legislature the power to define "open space" is to transfer local zoning powers to Sacramento.

It is unbelievable that at a time when property taxes are driving many people out of their homes, homeowners are being asked to vote a blank check for even higher taxes on their homes.

If you want to take the chance, fine.

If you don't—vote No on Proposition 3 on Nov. 8.

Committee Names Area Chairmen

The appointment of Attorney John Warren Berger of Palos Verdes Estates as 46th Assembly District chairman of the Committee to Retain Attorney General Tom Lynch has been announced by Stanley Gewirtz, Southern California chairman for Lynch.

Members of the committee who will assist Berger on the Lynch drive, all members of the Bar, are:

Gallons Add Up As Faucet Leaks

A faucet leaking 60 drops a minute will waste 2,299 gallons of water in a year's time, according to the Plumbing Industry Progress and Education Home Service Bureau. In addition to the waste, a water leak will cause unnecessary damage to the faucet and the lavatory or sink.

Crenshaw Place; Eric Rafften, Hermosa Beach; James M. Hall, 11611 S. Pacific Coast Highway, Redondo Beach; John Foley, 1609 Cravens Ave., and James L. Barrett, 12546 S. Hawthorne Blvd., Hawthorne.

DOES IT SOUND harmless? Don't kid yourself. If you're a homeowner and you vote for this proposition, you've just voted yourself a higher property tax bill.

THERE IS already legislation that gives a tax break to the legitimate farmer without the necessity of a perpetual deed restriction. The Land Conservation Act of 1965 allows owners of agricultural land to contract with a city or county to limit the use of such land to farming for at least 10 years and to be assessed at this lower use

Three Ballot Measures Win Teachers' Support

Approval of Propositions 1A, 2, and 4 on the Nov. 8 ballot was urged this week by the Representative Council of the Torrance Education Association.

Proposition 1A calls for basic revisions in the California Constitution and provides for annual sessions of the State Legislature. The council, in a resolution urging approval of the measure, noted it "is in the best interests of good education to have the Legislature meet each year."

Proposition 2 is a \$230 million bond proposal for higher education. The funds would provide new buildings, sites,

and other facilities for the statewide University of California and the state colleges.

Proposition 4 reduces the requirement for approval of local agency bond issues to 60 per cent when local elections are consolidated with general elections. A two-third majority now is required.

Approval of Proposition 4, the Council noted, would mean a \$9 million Torrance school bond issue would be carried by a 60 per cent majority. The council noted only four states now require a two-thirds majority for bond issues, while 32 states require only a simple majority.

Finch Calls for Task Force for Education

Support of a proposal for establishment of a bi-lingual task force of teachers to teach in elementary schools which have more than 10 per cent Mexican-American students was voiced by Robert H. Finch, Republican nominee for lieutenant governor, today.

The program, which has been proposed by Thomas W.

Braden, president of the State Board of Education, would provide specialists to help teach Mexican-American children to read, write and speak English as well as to use Spanish more effectively.

Local school districts could use the special teachers as needed and upon request, with the state providing additional pay and travel allowances.

Evening Classes Now Open

Archnair space scientists, newlyweds, and museum goers are being sought by Torrance Evening High School.

According to principal Raymond Collins, night school openings exist in classes geared towards these three groups of people.

For the men-in-space enthusiasts, Collins recommends studying astronomy and earth science. Classes meet at Torrance High School Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9:30 in room 280.

"The educational level of our Mexican-American children still shows that much work is needed to help them make an adjustment to an English-speaking society," Finch said. "The average Mexican-American adult has only a little over an eighth-grade education, while out of two million residents in California only one per cent are attending college or university."

Finch pointed out that the program which he supports would provide that classes be taught in English, but with bi-lingual teachers more Mexican-American children would be aided in learning English through their native tongue.

New brides, as well as seasoned wives, with a yen to be better hostesses are invited to enroll in food preparation. The Tuesday and Thursday class is conducted from 6:45 to 9:45 p.m. in room 221 at Torrance High School. In addition to cooking various foods, students will study nutritional value of foods, diet and health control, and will learn proper setting of the table and serving for all occasions.

Culture seekers are invited to enroll in the art honors course being offered for the first time this year at West High School. The class meets Tuesdays from 7 to 9:30 in room 5213 and is intended to give the student appreciation of art and music of the past.

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